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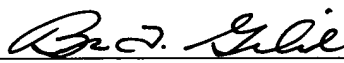
IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Application Serial No: 10/017,445 Confirmation No.: 6377  
Date Filed: December 14, 2001  
Application Title: Methods For Determining Organisms Not Requiring The  
Separation Of Fixative Or Excess Probe  
Applicants: Rigby et al.  
Group Art Unit: 1634  
Examiner: Sally A. Sakelaris  
Action Date: November 19, 2003  
Action Type: Second Office Action On Merits -FINAL  
Certified Mail No: 7003 1680 0001 6779 2056

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**Certificate of Mailing Pursuant to:  
37 C.F.R. §1.8**

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service with sufficient postage as First Class Mail in an envelope addressed to: Mail Stop Box AF, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 on this 30<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2004.

  
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Brian D. Gildea  
Reg. No. 39,995

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**Reply To Office Action**

Commissioner for Patents

Dear Sir or Madam:

A petition under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136(a) for an automatic three-month extension of time to reply to the present office action has been included with the papers accompanying this submission so please consider the following response to the Office Action mailed on November 19, 2003.